TWO WARS THAT CHANGED AMERICA: The Civil War and World War II

The year 2015 marks the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War and the 70th anniversary of WWII’s conclusion. This series will trace the rise of the U.S. as a world power and the consequences of this process.

All six lectures and film screenings are free and open to the public on the Blackwood Campus of Camden County College.

Civil War Prisons: An American Tragedy

This documentary film boldly exposes the least covered chapter of the Civil War that remains to this day one of the greatest tragedies in American History. Well over 56,000 prisoners perished needlessly due to exposure, starvation, and neglect. Included in the film are many of the Civil War prisons with emphasis on the immense suffering and death behind their walls. The failure to exchange prisoners comes under intense scrutiny in this edgy documentary. The film also takes aim at the politicians and generals whose warped strategies favored ideology over human beings.

Note this film screening will be on Monday not Wednesday.

Special Film Screening Premiere!

MONDAY, OCTOBER 26 • 6:30 P.M. • CIVIC HALL

Civil War Prisons:
An American Tragedy

The Center for Civic Leadership and Responsibility (CCLR) focuses on the needs and interests of educators and the community at large. Its goal is to create an informed citizenry through exploration of humanities, social sciences, natural sciences and issues critical to a democratic society. Citizens have the opportunity to meet scholars, scientists, government officials and business leaders to explore historical and current issues and discuss societal problems and their solutions.

camdencc.edu/civiccenter

Tuition-Free
Six Part Lecture Series
Beginning 9/16/15

TWO WARS THAT CHANGED AMERICA: The Civil War and World War II

This program was made possible by a grant from the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, a state partner of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Any views, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this program do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities or the New Jersey Council for the Humanities.
Why the Civil War Mattered

Steve Hahn, Roy F. and Jeanette P. Nichols Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania, will attempt to assess the impact of the Civil War in a rather unusual way: by imagining what the United States might have looked like if the Civil War had not occurred or ended differently. It will try to suggest how deeply embedded slavery was in antebellum America, how powerful slaveholders were to the very end, and how necessary the slaveholders’ military defeat was to many things we value about the modern United States.

Racial Violence After the American Civil War

William Carrigan, Professor of History, Rowan University, will discuss how one of the most important reasons for the collapse of Reconstruction was guerrilla violence orchestrated by white southerners against the freed people and their allies. This lecture will explore the causes and characteristics of this political violence, as well as the transformation of racial violence into spectacle Lynchings in the decades after the end of Reconstruction.

Post Wars and Cold Wars: War and America’s Rise (and Decline?) as a Global Super Power

Michael Adas, Abraham E. Voorhees Professor of History, Rutgers University New Brunswick, will discuss how the two world wars, of the first half of the twentieth century, saw the rise of the United States as the greatest global power in human history. The Great War, gravely weakened its predecessor global hegemon, Great Britain, and devastated its most likely competitor, Germany. The second worldwide conflict left the cities and economies of both its allies and enemies, especially Germany and Japan, in ruins and only Russia proved galvanizing, and the war years ushered in both tremendous gains for civil rights and dangerous backlash from the forces of white supremacy. Moving from army bases and defense plants to courthouses, buses, and ballot boxes, this talk will explore the impact of the war years, and the important role played by veterans, in shaping the postwar civil rights movement. It will also examine the powerful forces of resistance to wartime change (real or perceived), examining both the gains of the decade and the limitations of 1940s reform.

The Best Years of Their Lives: The Troubled Homecoming of the ‘Greatest Generation’

Thomas Childers, Professor of History, University of Pennsylvania, will explore the impact of the war on marriage, mental health, the “baby boom,” the “divorce boom,” “the housing boom,” and other social and cultural phenomena during the post war period.

Double V for Victory: Black Americans, WWII, and the Civil Rights Movement

Jill Ogline Titus, Ph.D., Associate Director, Civil War Institute, Gettysburg College, will discuss how one month after the attack on Pearl Harbor, James Thompson, a cafeteria worker at an aircraft plant in Kansas, wrote a letter to the Pittsburgh Courier calling on black Americans to launch a Double V campaign linking victory over fascism abroad to victory over segregation and racism at home. This call for using the United States’ entry into the war to propel change on the home front proved galvanizing, and the war years ushered in both tremendous gains for civil rights and dangerous backlash from the forces of white supremacy. Moving from army bases and defense plants to courthouses, buses, and ballot boxes, this talk will explore the impact of the war years, and the important role played by veterans, in shaping the postwar civil rights movement. It will also examine the powerful forces of resistance to wartime change (real or perceived), examining both the gains of the decade and the limitations of 1940s reform.

From WWI to Iraq: War and America’s Rise (and Decline?) as a Global Super Power

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This year marks the 150th anniversary of the end of the Civil War and the 70th anniversary of World War II’s conclusion. Both conflicts profoundly changed America often in unintended ways that still resonate today. Lectures, films and documentaries will be used to examine the impact of these conflicts on the emergence of the United States as a world power both economically and politically. It will focus on the struggle of African Americans and other racial minorities, women, immigrants and labor to attain their rightful places in society along with the emergence of the Greatest Generation. The series will conclude with an analysis of America’s future prospects.

Note: Registration for this 15-week course includes your registration for the lectures. On the night of a lecture the class will meet at 7 p.m. in Civic Hall in the Connector Building.